

CURRENT STATUS OF CLAIMS

Please find the current status of the claims, as of the filing of this amendment paper, as follows:

Please cancel Claims 5, 12, and 20 without prejudice or disclaimer.

1. (Currently amended) A tubular string feature locator for detecting when a selected characteristic on a tubular string suspended in a well has a preselected vertical relationship to ~~the~~ a rig elevator, the locator comprising:

sensor means to detect at least one characteristic of the tubular that has a known vertical relationship to a location on the tubular selected for gripping with elevator mounted tubular gripping means and to produce an output signal when the characteristic is sensed; and

a sensor mounting arrangement that places the sensor means the same distance and direction from the elevator tubular gripping means as the known distance and direction between the characteristic to be sensed and the location on the tubular selected for gripping, wherein the sensors are arranged with at least two vertically adjacent sensors on different vertical locations, and wherein the sensors collectively accommodate lateral movement of said tubular, both sensing the movement, and the feature change being sensed when one sensor detects tubular string features the other sensor does not detect.

2. Canceled.

3. (Currently amended) A tubular string feature locator for detecting the vertical position of a tubular string suspended in a well relative to ~~the~~ a drilling rig elevator, the locator comprising:

a said drilling rig elevator to function as a carrier for tubular feature sensors and related mounting means;

a plurality of said tubular feature sensors mounted on said elevator and arranged to sense selected characteristics of the tubular extending through the elevator and to produce an output signal component indicative of the presence of the selected tubular characteristics, wherein the

sensors are arranged with at least two vertically adjacent sensors on different vertical locations, and wherein the sensors collectively accommodate lateral movement of said tubular, both sensing the movement, and the feature change being sensed when one sensor detects tubular string features the other sensor does not detect.; and

the total of said signal components to comprise a signal to indicate the presence of a said feature.

4. (Currently amended) The tubular string feature locator according to Claim 3 wherein said sensor comprises a plurality of sensors, each of which has a mechanical element extending from the sensor to the surface of the tubular extending through the elevator.

5-9. Canceled.

10. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ An oilfield tubular string feature locator for detecting the vertical position of ~~a~~ an oilfield tubular string suspended in a well relative to ~~the~~ a drilling rig elevator, the locator comprising:

a said drilling rig elevator to function as a carrier for tubular feature sensors and related mounting means;

at least one of said tubular feature sensors mounted on said elevator and arranged to sense selected characteristics of the tubular extending through the elevator and to produce an output signal indicative of the presence of selected tubular characteristics, and

wherein said sensor emits sound to travel through the airspace surrounding the tubular to impinge upon the surface of the tubular, and respond to airborne echo characteristic to determine the distance between reference features on the tubular, and the sensor, said output signals from each sensor being processed to produce sensed tubular feature related information.

11-12 Canceled.

13. (Currently amended) An apparatus for indicating a desired position of a suspended insertable oil field assembly capable of being lowered into a tubular comprising :

a traveling block from which are suspended at least two bails having first and second lower ends respectively;

an elevator fixedly attached to said bails;

an insertable oil field assembly, having a lower end, suspended from said traveling block, whereby said traveling block insertably lowers said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly into a tubular positioned below said traveling block, wherein said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly has a first reflecting surface disposed about said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly at a pre-determined distance from the lower end of said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly; and

a sensor, capable of emitting a signal to be reflected by said first reflecting surface disposed about said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly, wherein the reflected signal indicates the position of said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly relative to said tubular.

14. (Currently amended) ~~The position indicating apparatus of Claim 13 further~~ An apparatus for indicating a desired position of a suspended insertable oil field assembly capable of being lowered into a tubular comprising:

a traveling block from which are suspended at least two bails having first and second lower ends respectively;

an elevator fixedly attached to said bails;

an insertable oil field assembly, having a lower end, suspended from said traveling block, whereby said traveling block insertably lowers said insertable oil field assembly into a tubular positioned below said traveling block, wherein said insertable oil field assembly has a first reflecting surface disposed about said insertable oil field assembly at a pre-determined distance from the lower end of said insertable oil field assembly; ~~and~~

a second reflecting surface wherein said second reflecting surface is positioned substantially 180 degrees from said sensor, and wherein said second reflecting surface being capable of reflecting said sensor signal when said first reflecting surface is mis-aligned; and

a sensor, capable of emitting a signal to be reflected by said first reflecting surface disposed about said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly, wherein the reflected signal indicates the position of said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly relative to said tubular.

15. (Currently amended) The position indicating apparatus of Claim 14 wherein said sensor, said first reflecting surface, and said second reflecting surface are substantially aligned in the same horizontal plane.

16. (Currently amended) The position indicating apparatus of Claim ~~12~~ 13 wherein said sensor is mounted on said bails.

17. (Currently amended) The position indicating apparatus of Claim ~~12~~ 13 wherein said sensor is mounted on said elevator.

18. (Currently amended) An apparatus for indicating the position of an oil field assembly suspended for insertion into a tubular comprising :

a rig suspension system for lowering tubulars and oil field assemblies, each having an outside surface, into a wellbore;

a first reflective surface disposed about the outside surface of said oil field ~~tool~~ assembly;
a second reflecting surface for reflecting said sensor emitted signal when the first reflecting surface is mis-aligned;

an elevator fixedly attached to said rig suspension system; and

a sensor mounted to said elevator, said sensor being capable of emitting a signal capable of being reflected by said first or second reflective surface, wherein said reflected signal indicates the position of said oil field assembly with respect to said tubular.

19. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 18 wherein said sensor and said first or second reflecting surfaces are substantially aligned in the same horizontal plane.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Original) An apparatus of claim 18 wherein said sensor further comprises:

a housing for fixedly mounting said sensor to said rig suspension system;

a signal emitter for emitting a signal capable of being reflected by said reflecting surface;

a signal receiver for receiving the signal reflected by said reflecting surface;

a cover for the signal emitter and the signal receiver; and

an air supply, wherein said air supply provides air flow across said cover to prevent substance accumulation which will interfere with said signal emitter and signal receiver device.

22. (Currently amended) A sensor indicating the position of an oil field assembly suspended for insertion into a tubular comprising :

a housing for fixedly mounting said sensor to ~~said~~ a rig suspension system;

a signal emitter for emitting a signal capable of being reflected by a reflecting surface, said reflecting surface being disposed about said oil field assembly;

a signal receiver for receiving the signal reflected by said reflecting surface;

a cover for the signal emitter and the signal receiver; and

an air supply, wherein said air supply provides air flow across said cover to prevent substance accumulation which will interfere with said signal emitter and signal receiver,

wherein the reflected signal indicates the position of said oil field assembly with respect to said tubular.

23. (Original) The sensor of Claim 22 wherein said sensor is mounted to elevator bails depending from said rig suspension system.

24. (Original) The sensor of Claim 22 wherein said sensor is mounted on an elevator depending from said rig suspension system.

25. (Currently amended) A tubular string feature and position locator for detecting the vertical position of a tubular suspended in a well bore comprising:

a drilling elevator to function as a carrier for sensors and related mounting apparatus;

at least one sensor mounted on said elevator arranged to sense selected characteristics of the tubular extending through the elevator and to produce an output signal indicative of the presence of selected tubular characteristics;

at least one sensor mounted on said elevator arranged to sense the position of an insertable oil field assembly suspended, for insertion into said tubular, from ~~the~~ a drilling rig and being lowered substantially in tandem with said elevator, said sensor being capable of producing

an output signal indicative of the position of the suspended insertable oil field assembly relative to said tubular.

26. (Original) A tubular string feature and position locator of Claim 25 wherein the sensors for detecting the tubular characteristics and the insertable oil field assembly position are mounted in a single housing and wherein the output signal is processed to indicate said tubular characteristics and said position indication.

27. (Currently amended) A method for indicating a desired position of a rig suspended insertable oil field assembly capable of being lowered into a tubular comprising :

providing a rig suspension and lowering system;

lowering an elevator which is lowered substantially in tandem with said rig suspended ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly;

suspending said insertable oil field assembly, having a lower end, from said rig suspension and lowering system, whereby said rig suspension and lowering system insertably lowers said insertable oil field assembly into a tubular positioned below said rig suspension and lowering system, wherein said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly has a first reflecting surface disposed about said insertable oil field assembly at a pre-determined distance ~~form~~ from the lower end of said ~~an~~ insertable oil field assembly;

emitting a signal to be reflected by said first reflecting surface disposed about said insertable oil field assembly, wherein a source of the signal, being emitted and reflected by the first reflecting surface, is substantially aligned in the same horizontal plane as the first reflective surface while the insertable oil field assembly is being raised or lowered by the rig suspension system, and wherein the reflected signal indicates the position of said insertable oil field assembly relative to said tubular; and

indicating, by a signal, that said insertable oil field assembly has been insertably positioned within said tubular at a pre-determined distance.

28. (Currently amended) A tubular string feature and position locator for detecting the vertical position of a tubular suspended in a well bore comprising:

a traveling block from which are suspended at least two bails having a first and second

lower ends respectively;

a drilling elevator to function as a carrier for sensors and related mounting apparatus, wherein said elevator is suspended from said at least two bails;

at least one sensor mounted on said elevator arranged to sense selected characteristics of the tubular extending through the elevator and to produce an output signal indicative of the presence of selected tubular characteristics; and

at least one sensor mounted on said bails arranged to sense the position of an insertable oil field assembly suspended, for insertion into said tubular, from ~~the~~ a drilling rig and being lowered substantially in tandem with said elevator, said sensor being capable of producing an output signal indicative of the position of the suspended insertable oil field assembly relative to said tubular.